

Weddings at Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine and Hampton National Historic Site

Based on the Special Park Use regulations and policies, weddings may be allowed at Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine and Hampton National Historic Site. Weddings, renewal of vows, and other ceremonies require a \$50 non-refundable administrative fee. Other fees, to be assessed upon approval of the permit, may include a location fee, a facility use fee, and cost recovery. All permits are dependent on availability of space and staffing and whether the activity can take place under federal or NPS rules and regulations.

Location:

In order to avoid damage to park resources and unreasonable interference with visitors to park programs at Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, weddings will be located primarily in the grassy area near the Civil War Powder Magazine, the grassy area between the statue of Orpheus and the Star Fort, and the grassy area directly south of the Star Fort, but not in or to the east of the cherry blossom trees. Under no circumstances are ceremonies to impede visitors by blocking the Seawall Trail.

Weddings at Hampton National Historic Site will be located primarily in the grassy area between the Visitor Contact Station and the Orangery. Weddings are not permitted in public facilities such as Visitor Centers, roadside turnouts, parking areas, overlooks, or in special wildlife viewing areas. No sites can be reserved for the exclusive use of your event. Scheduled park programs and activities may be taking place at the same time and in the same general area.

Restrictions and requirements for weddings include:

1. Weddings are not permitted in the Star Fort or the Mansion.
2. A written permit is required for all wedding ceremonies fixing the date, time, and place of the ceremony.
3. Only chairs are authorized for any ceremony. No equipment will be provided by Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine or Hampton National Historic Site.
4. Access for other park visitors must not be impeded. Permits do not authorize exclusive use of any public lands, and the permittee must insure that the rights of the general public visiting Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine and Hampton National Historic Site are not infringed.
5. Park visitor centers, restrooms, and other buildings may not be used for wedding preparations such as dressing, picture-taking, rehearsals, and waiting areas. These facilities may not be used in the event of inclement weather. Weddings are an outdoor event only.
6. Facilities for receptions and parties do not exist in the park.
7. Available parking is limited and cannot be guaranteed. Permittees and their guests must park within designated parking areas. Carpooling or private shuttle is recommended and may be required for some sites. Overnight parking and horse-drawn carriages are prohibited.
8. Amplified or loud music and public address systems are prohibited. Acoustic music will be considered for ceremonies but not guaranteed. 36 CFR 2.12 will be followed for all audio disturbances.

9. The release/use of balloons, birds or butterflies and the throwing of rice, birdseed, flower petals or other natural or artificial material are not permitted.
10. No altars, flower containers, arches, railings, ropes, torches or candelabras are permitted.
11. Permittee must exercise particular care to avoid disturbing wildlife and vegetation.
12. Affixing signage to existing buildings, property, signs, poles or plants is prohibited.
13. All trash must be placed in onsite trash containers. If the site does not have containers or if trash volume exceeds container capacity, permittee must bag and remove trash from parklands. Permittees failing to affect such cleanup will be charged the cost for such services.
14. No fires, candles, lanterns, tiki torches, or any other type of open flame is authorized.
15. No decoration or setup of tables, lecterns, chairs, or floral arrangements are permitted except hand held bouquets.
16. Small tents, canopies, or other similar structures are not allowed.
17. Weddings are limited to 200 guests, to include the wedding party, photographer, and guests.

Cancellations or change of date/location:

Permittees are allowed to move their scheduled ceremony to another available date if weather or other conditions make a change necessary. Typically, only one wedding per weekend is authorized and wedding requests are taken at a first come, first serve basis. Permits will not be charged an application fee if the date specified has already been reserved.

Cancellations once the permit has begun by the time specified on the permit will result in limited fees. No call and/or no shows will be responsible for all actual costs associated with event. Cancellations up to 24 hours before the event will result in no charge beyond the non-refundable administrative fee.

Fees estimated on the permit may fluctuate based on the number of Rangers monitoring the event, number of participants (up to 200), or time. Permittee is not allowed to go over/extend the time specified on the permit, but may shorten their ceremony. Monitors will be assigned at the discretion of the Superintendent.

Application:

Please fill out the Special Park Use application found [HERE](#), and send the completed document to FOMC_PERMITS@NPS.GOV. Designate your form of payment on the application and the Special Park Use Coordinator will contact you to obtain the required \$50 non refundable administrative fee. **The permit process takes three to four weeks. Please submit your application at least 60 days before your event.** Additional fees, to be considered once the request has been approved, can be found [HERE](#).

Once a permit has been signed by the permittee and the Superintendent, it is finalized. Any changes will result in a new permit and must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

There is no guarantee of an approved permit. The permit will be reviewed by the Special Park Use Coordinator and the Superintendent's staff for approval.